

State P-16 Council's Math Curricula Alignment Committee
March 23, 2006
Meeting Summary

The Committee met March 23, 2006, from 9:30-12:00am at the Tennessee Higher Education Commission office. The organizational meeting was well attended with additional members participating through conference call. A Committee roster is available on the [Math Curricula Advisory Committee](#) THEC web site.

Dr. Richard G. Rhoda, THEC Executive Director, welcomed the Committee, thanked them for being a part of this endeavor, and placed particular attention on the importance of K-12 and higher education working together toward a common good. Dr. Rhoda outlined the role of the State P-16 Council in moving a state-wide agenda toward improved student performance in mathematics as a college readiness strategy. He also indicated that the State Council will provide the oversight and leadership role for state-level initiatives that will incorporate and supplement the excellent work of the local P-16 councils that have been organized through the Tennessee Board of Regents.

Linda Doran, THEC Senior Policy Officer, chairs the Committee. She presented a power point presentation on the genesis of the Committee and the State P-16 Council's rationale for focusing first on mathematics in curriculum standards reform. She recounted the Council's conviction that meaningful change can occur only through a "seamless" set of standards for student learning, with K-12 and higher education meeting accountability within their policy arenas. These data included "pipeline" evidence that high school graduation, college entry, and degree completion rates for Tennessee are below SREB and national averages. These data framed the assumption that student proficiency in mathematics is a significant indicator for success in college. Dr. Doran summarized current state-wide initiatives allied to the objectives of the Committee; these included the Tennessee GEAR UP grant and Tennessee Lottery Dual Enrollment Grant. Dr. John Scott, Assistant Commissioner, SDE. Dr. Gary Nixon, Executive Director, SBE, and Dr. Deborah Boyd, Executive Director, SDE Office of Curriculum and Instruction, briefed the Committee on the completed high school uniform grading system and a number of K-12 high school redesign initiatives now underway.

The Committee agreed that it is important to gather information about curriculum alignment processes recently undertaken in other states. SBE, SDE, TBR, UT, and THEC staff had previously consulted University of North Carolina System staff about the process for North Carolina policy changes to require 4 units of high school math. At the March 23 meeting, Dr. Jim Applegate, Vice President for Academic Affairs, Kentucky Postsecondary Council, and Dr. Dianne Bazell, Kentucky Council staff, outlined (by conference call) the work that state has done to institute a 4-unit math high school graduation requirement and other standards changes. Their comments focused a Committee conversation around specific issues such as the importance of input into the processes from all constituents and a thorough evaluation of projected benefits from change. The Committee wished to have a similar conversation with Oklahoma Regents staff.

Dr. Katie High, Associate Vice President for Student Life for the UT System, introduced Dr. Jim White, ACT, who presented an overview (by conference call) of Tennessee high school graduates' performance data, ACT assessments to indicate student readiness for college, ACT subscore Benchmarks for Student Readiness, and ACT Student Readiness Standards. Dr. Nixon walked the Committee through TN/national comparative data on Tennessee student performance relative to ACT math subscores as benchmarks for

success in college. The Committee agreed to dedicate more time to exploring ACT standards and data at a subsequent meeting.

Dr. Scott Eddins, Mathematics Consultant, SDE, introduced major points for further discussion, including the specific coverage and range of assessments relative to specific mathematics skills and knowledge. This topic, along with discussion regarding processes for K-12 curriculum revision, will return to the agenda for the next meeting.

The next Committee meeting will be scheduled for late May. Members were asked to provide the following information for posting on a THEC web site dedicated to the Math Curricula Alignment effort:

Send to Linda Doran summary descriptions of local initiatives aimed at improving student learning in math, professional development, research in math education, and other topics to widen the Committee's awareness of the scope of activity across the state.

Members were also asked to give some thought to the following question, which will be taken up by the group at the next meeting: "What should a student know and be able to do at entry in college-level (general education) math courses?"

The meeting adjourned at 12:00.